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Eating my way through Berrien County

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IN FOCUS

Breaking the Bank

When I first heard that Andrews was going to host its very own triathlon, the first annual Beach 2 Bank Challenge, I was amused. I have seen a few Ironman Triathlons on TV—competitors stumbling across the finish line, dreadfully fatigued from a 2.5-mile swim, a 120-mile bike ride, and a full 26.2-mile marathon run.

Would I see any of my current writing students lose control of their bodily functions?

Unlike some of the other "older" Beach 2 Bank competitors, whose idea of a triathlon features a Taco Bell burrito to feed, 24 hour extreme channel surfing (including a mandatory "bladder hold" of the same length), and a single game of Scrabble played to completion, I sensed that the Beach 2 Bank would be a very different beast. And it was.

Orchestrated by Social Recreation Director Jack Mentges, the first Beach 2 Bank was one of the highlights of the spring semester. Beginning at Weko Beach in Bridgman, Mich., the triathlon included a 5-mile beach-run, a 17-mile bike ride, a 4.5-mile canoe trip, including a short (hilly) portage, and a 1.5-mile sprint to the AU track and the finish line. Maybe it should have been called a pentathlon.

I signed up on what was ostensibly the English department team, except that all but two of our department members were too smart to participate, and the two of us who did, forced our wives to compete. Naturally, this was our only moment of clear tactical thinking, as both women proved to be the strongest links on our team.

Along with Dr. Scott Moncrieff, chair of the English department (who "encouraged" my participation with mild threats related to

future promotions), and his wife, Lilia, Brynja and I teamed-up for the Beach 2 Bank with a lot of enthusiasm and the hope that most of the other teams in the competition would be using leaky canoes.

They did not.

But we had a great time and finished 12th out of 21 teams. Pretty respectable for a 4-person team in an event that included

This issue of Focus brings two radically different events together. Our coverage of Homecoming 2003, A Season of Renewal, highlights many of the weekend events in a photo essay beginning on page 17, including the first annual Easter Passion Play.

This issue also examines a subject that has generated a lot of discussion on campus over the last few months, the recent war in

Iraq. Three professors weigh in with their views on the conflict. Professor of anthropology Øystein LaBianca takes a look at the changing role of the United States in global relations and

how the Andrews field-based International Development Program might contribute to improving America's image abroad.

History professor April Summitt discusses the implications of war and the reconstruction of Iraq on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And religion professor Keith Mattingly reflects on his personal experience as a chaplain in the first gulf war and the profound questions that war raises.

Still on the subject of war, in our Time Pieces feature, Meredith Jones-Gray uncovers some fascinating reflections on World War II made by EMC students who were called to serve their country. Also, in the Student Spotlight, recent graduate Alex Carpenter writes about his experience as a peace activist on campus during the last school year.

Finally, our second Aluminati features Laura (Beardsley) Long, a 1961 graduate, who reflects on her time at Andrews and the direction her life has taken since graduation.

~ Ivan Davis is assistant professor of English and the editor of Focus.



END OF THE ROAD: Ivan & Brynja Davis and Lilia & Scott Moncrieff

mostly 6-person squads. We've already started gearing up for next year's competition, considering ways we can sneak a small trolling motor into the back of our canoe.